1999-2000 Annual Report to the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology

April 2000

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BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL ON
ADMISSIONS & TRANSFER
SUPPORTING BC's EDUCATION SYSTEM

1999-2000 Annual Report
to the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology

April 2000

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Introduction

Ministry Expectations

The British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) received a Management Letter from the Assistant Deputy Minister of Advanced Education, Training and Technology dated June 14, 1999 (1). This Letter provided a clear set of expectations for BCCAT with respect to the various projects and activities that should be undertaken in the 1999-2000 fiscal year. This report documents what has been accomplished relative to the items listed, and also covers other activities undertaken but not stipulated specifically in the Management Letter.

In previous years the Council put considerable effort into assessing the overall effectiveness of the B.C. transfer system. This stemmed from a recognition of the increasing complexity of the post-secondary system and its impact on student transfer. The Council's assessment concluded that the transfer system was working well but could and should be enhanced. Consequently, in this past year BCCAT has initiated plans and projects to improve credit transfer arrangements and processes.

Highlights of Transfer in British Columbia

Number and kind of institutions comprising the B.C. transfer system

The public post-secondary education system in British Columbia encompasses twenty-eight autonomous institutions – six universities, five university colleges, five institutes, 11 colleges and one agency. Fourteen public institutions offer programs leading to baccalaureate degrees. For the purpose of recording all formalized transfer arrangements three private institutions as well as Yukon College are included in the *B.C. Transfer Guide*, the official record of such agreements.

Number and type of transfer arrangements

The B.C. transfer system is designed to allow students to pursue their first year or two of academic study at a community or university college and have this work recognized by a degree-granting institution towards the completion of a baccalaureate degree.

- The *B.C. Transfer Guide* lists equivalencies for first and second year courses taken at 23 "sending" institutions, transferring to 12 "receiving" institutions. As of March 31, 2000, the *B.C. Transfer Guide* included a total of 6,952 such courses (2).

- For every sending institution course listed in the *B.C. Transfer Guide*, there are, on average, six transfer agreements in place with other institutions.

- As well as individual course transfer, the *Transfer Guide* lists approximately 300 "block transfer" arrangements, which allow students to receive credit for a cluster of courses such as a certificate or diploma usually related to a specific degree program.

- In the year ending March 31, 2000, a total of 582 new sending institution courses were added to the *Transfer Guide* database, 179 were deleted and a further 127 were renumbered or re-prefixed (888 changes in total to sending institution courses) (3).

- In the same year, a total of 5,146 adds/changes to receiving institution courses were recorded (4).

Profile of B.C. students transferring to SFU, UBC and UVic[1]

Research conducted by SFU, UBC and UVic on behalf of the Council provides the following information about B.C. transfer students[2]:

- In the past five years, 21,459 B.C. students transferred into the three largest universities, an average of 4,292 transfer students each year.[3]

- A significant number of students transfers to the universities each year, although on a proportional basis, fewer students transfer compared with those entering directly from high school (a ratio of 40/60). In the five-year period examined, this ranges from a low of 30% at UBC to a high of 50% at SFU, with UVic at 44%.

- Compared to students entering directly from high school, more transfer students study part-time.

- Transfer students are older on average than students entering directly from high school.

Mandate of the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer

The mandate of the Council is to support and facilitate effective articulation, transfer and admission arrangements for students wishing to move between the province's colleges, institutes, university colleges and universities. Underlying the Council's activities is a commitment to reflect and enhance the major values of the post-secondary education system.

1 The majority of B.C. transfer students transfer to one of the three largest universities, thus the data from these institutions. Other degree-granting institutions are in the process of preparing reports for the Council profiling students transferring to their respective institutions.

2 Based on SFU and UVic data for the period 1994-95 to 1998-99 and the most recent UBC data for the period 1993-94 to 1997-98.

3 A transfer student is defined by each institution as one who transfers a minimum number of units or credits (12 units to UVic, 24 credits to UBC, 30 credits to SFU).

Council Members and Staff

Members of Council during the year 1999-2000 were:

Dr. John Dennison (Co-Chair until August 31, 1999)
Dr. Bob Brown (Co-Chair beginning September 1, 1999)
Dr. Frank Gelin (Co-Chair & Executive Director)
Mr. Dileep Athaide – college faculty
Dr. Roger Barnsley – colleges, university colleges & institutes
Dr. Roger Blackman – universities
Mr. Rick Carruthers – secondary school superintendents (appointed October 1999)
Ms. Sheila Colbert-Kerns – college, university colleges & institutes (until August 1999)
Dr. Terry Jean Crawford – university faculty
Dr. Beth Davies – colleges, university colleges & institutes (appointed October 1999)
Dr. Rachael Donovan – colleges, university colleges & institutes (resigned June 1999)
Ms. Valerie Dunsterville – colleges, university colleges & institutes (appointed October 1999)
Dr. Neil Guppy – universities (appointed October 1999)
Mr. Ken Harvey – secondary school superintendents (until August 1999)
Mr. Greg Link – colleges, university colleges & institutes (appointed October 1999)
Mr. Michael Longton – university faculty
Ms. Ann McArthur – colleges, university colleges & institutes
Mr. Jaimie McEvoy – students
Mr. Sid Mindess – universities (until August 1999)
Ms. Barbara Partridge – private post-secondary institutions (appointed October 1999)
Dr. Martin Petter – universities
Dr. Deborah Poff – universities
Ms. Maureen Shaw – college faculty
Dr. Terry Sherwood – universities
Ms. Susan Witter – colleges, university colleges & institutes (until August 1999)

Seven new members joined the Council during this past year including Dr. Bob Brown who as of September 1st replaced Dr. John Dennison who had served as Co-Chair of the Council for six years. An orientation session was provided to new members, focussing on such Council related topics as: history; structure; legal status; relationship to Ministry; mandate and role; transfer guide; research findings; publications; past, current, and future initiatives; and accountability to the Ministry and system.

The Council held four general meetings during 1999-2000, one of which was held at the Kelowna campus of Okanagan University College (October 1999) and one at the Open Learning Agency, Burnaby (March 2000). At each of the latter two meetings time was provided to meet with members of faculty, staff and students to discuss transfer-related issues specific to their institution. The Okanagan location was chosen as it had been ten years since the inaugural meeting of the Council, held at that institution.

Staff

The Council office is staffed by four full-time professionals who oversee the work of the Council, its committees and all related activities pertaining to the implementation of the Council's mandate. The Council staff members are: Frank Gelin, Executive Director, Finola Finlay, Associate Director, Barbara Clague, Executive Secretary, and Jean Karlinski, Administrative Assistant. In addition, the Council is under contract with Raymond Bendall who serves on a part-time basis as the Council's Transfer Guide Coordinator. He oversees the production of the *B.C. Transfer Guide* and maintains the Council's Web site.

Messages from the Co-Chairs

***Dr. John Dennison**, Co-Chair until 31 August 1999*

It has been both a privilege and a pleasure to serve as the Co-Chair of the Council for six years between 1993 and 1999. During that time the Council has made considerable progress in accord with its mandate to facilitate admission and transfer of students within British Columbia's post-secondary system. The many initiatives undertaken by Council, such as with regard to the associate degrees, innovative transfer pathways, and the preparation of publications designed to aid students in the transfer process, are due to the dedicated leadership of Frank Gelin and Finola Finlay, as Director and Associate Director. Their commitment to fulfilling the Council's mission has been outstanding. Special reference should also be made to the two staff members, Barbara Clague and Jean Karlinski, whose professional contributions go well beyond the normal role of "support" staff.

There is still very much to be done regarding the future role of the Council and its place within the system. As the number of institutions expands so does the complexity of transfer policy. While the challenges are many the Council, under its present leadership, is well equipped to meet those challenges with confidence.

I wish it every success.

***Dr. Bob Brown**, Co-Chair from 1 September 1999*

My first year as Co-Chair has been a great learning experience for me. Most importantly I've learned that while we have an extremely complex, multi-tiered post-secondary system, there is enormous good will and willingness to co-operate within it. Council must deal with many potentially divisive, contentious issues, but the representatives from the various institutions and agencies that make up Council continue to face these issues from the perspective of what's best for the system and its students. In fact the most common expression I've heard is "what's the best solution for our students?" The recent unanimous approval of the proposed revisions to the Associate Degrees in Arts and Science demonstrates this very well.

I heartily endorse the comments of my predecessor John Dennison regarding the Council staff, and look forward to working with them in the coming years.

Report on Year's Activities

Transfer Guide and Web Site

The *B.C. Transfer Guide*, published annually by BCCAT, is the formal record of all transfer agreements between and among participants in the post-secondary transfer system. This includes all B.C. public post-secondary institutions as well as three private ones (Trinity Western University, Columbia College and Coquitlam College) and Yukon College. BCCAT published its tenth annual edition of the *B.C. Transfer Guide* (5) and distributed 2400 copies to public and private post-secondary institutions, senior secondary schools, municipal libraries, education ministries across Canada, and a number of public and private agencies and organizations which request copies. The online version of the Guide has proved to be most successful with 80,661 "hits" occurring to the main transfer guide menu in 1999 compared to 50,239 hits in 1998 and 24,378 hits in 1997 (6). We hope to be able to reduce the number of copies printed in future years as more people are able to rely on the online version.

It takes time and effort to ensure that the *Transfer Guide* is an effective tool for educational planning. This is an extremely complex task given the interactions of so many institutions involved in its production. The online *Transfer Guide* is regularly updated throughout the year. Detailed summaries of changes to the *Transfer Guide* data are posted on the Web site where they can be easily checked for accuracy by sending and receiving institutions. The Transfer Guide Coordinator works diligently to produce the *Guide* as well as assisting BCCAT staff on related issues (7).

Revisions to the B.C. Transfer Credit Evaluation form were completed so as to facilitate the collection of more complete and accurate data for the *Transfer Guide*. During the past year, a prototype for a Web-based electronic transfer credit evaluation form was developed. Such a Web form could be used by sending and receiving institutions to request and record the assessments of formal requests for transfer credit. If pursued, this would replace the current system, which relies on time-intensive faxing or mailing of extensive documentation back and forth several times between institutions. Last year, over 6000 changes were made to the *Transfer Guide* and each of these changes was initiated and approved using paper documentation. Details of the prototype will be demonstrated at the Institutional Contact Persons meeting in May, 2000 and the views of institutional contacts as to the value of this approach will be sought. Should the Council wish to develop this option, the cost of system wide implementation would need to be assessed and included in our next budget request.

BCCAT staff met with the Transfer Guide Coordinator to conduct an internal review of BCCAT Online in light of a growing body of information posted on our Web site. We also reviewed our publication formats. Consequently, our home page (www.bccat.bc.ca) and other pages have been substantially modified and we will be initiating a new print publication that will announce new developments related to the work of our Council.

Associate Degree Review Task Force

In 1998, an Associate Degree Review Task Force, chaired by Dr. Peter Jones, was established to review the curricular elements and requirements for the associate degrees and to make recommendations regarding any changes to those requirements. In addition, the Task Force was asked to investigate the potential use of the associate degree as a transfer credential and prepare the most acceptable approach to degree-granting institutions regarding this topic.

To facilitate system wide discussions, draft curricular revisions were prepared and circulated, as was a discussion paper on the potential use of the associate degree as a transfer credential (8). Extensive consultation occurred over an 18 month period with several system-wide committees (Senior Instructional Officers Committee, University Vice Presidents Academic, University College Vice Presidents, Academic and Career/Technical Deans and Directors) as well as meetings at some specific institutions (SFU, UVic, UBC, Malaspina University-College, Langara College) and with Ministry staff (9). Written requests for advice were sent to all institutions including all Educational Councils. The review process went very well and the Task Force received many constructive suggestions.

At its March 2000 meeting, the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer carefully reviewed the work of its Task Force and reached *unanimous* agreement on a set of revised curricular requirements for both the Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees. These recommendations were subsequently submitted to the Minister for his consideration and the Council is now awaiting his response (10).

Recommended Curricular Revisions

The general thrust of the proposed curricular changes is to make the requirements somewhat more flexible. A few clarifying notes are also added and there is a re-organization of the requirements. The most significant changes are:

a) adding a substantial introduction that clarifies the intent of the associate degree and outlines those key skills and abilities essential for academic success that the degree program is designed to develop;

b) requiring an overall average grade of 'C' (cumulative GPA of 2.0 or its equivalent) for all courses rather than a minimum grade of 'C' in each course;

c) allowing Statistics courses in various disciplines to satisfy part of the Science requirement for the Associate of Arts degree; and

d) changing the Math requirement for the Associate of Science degree from 6 credits of Calculus to 6 credits of Math of which only 3 credits must be in Calculus.

The Council also reaffirmed its commitment to continue its work with baccalaureate degree-granting institutions, encouraging them to develop policies and practices to facilitate transfer opportunities for students who hold an associate degree. For several years, Simon Fraser University has granted priority admission to students with an associate degree and the B.C. Open University has had a block transfer policy for students with an associate degree. Early in the Council's recent deliberations to review the associate degree the University of Northern British Columbia established a transfer policy that provides priority admission and guarantees students credit for all the courses in their associate degree including those courses that would not otherwise have course-by-course transfer credit. It is this kind of flexibility the Council would like to achieve eventually with all of our baccalaureate degree-granting institutions.

Transfer & Articulation Committee

As of December 1999 the Program & Articulation Committee and the Transfer Innovations Committee were combined to form the new committee entitled the Transfer & Articulation Committee (TAC). Dr. Terry Sherwood is currently the chair of the TAC. There had been overlap in the mandates of the two committees, but more importantly it was felt that the work of transfer innovations should now be encompassed by the mandate of a permanent committee of Council. The new mandate and committee structure combine elements of both previous committees, and the new name reflects that fact.

Transfer Innovations Projects

In the spring of 1999, articulation committees were invited to submit grant proposals for Transfer Innovations Projects. These projects were described in detail in a set of documents prepared for the information of committees. These documents have since been updated and reissued for the academic year 2000-01 (11).

From eleven proposals submitted, ten projects were selected for contracts and are currently underway. They are from the following committees: Earth Sciences (2); Environmental Programs (2); Forestry; Hospitality Management; Music; Physical Education & Kinesiology; Theatre; and Tourism Management. Four different types of project are being undertaken – flexible pre-major, descriptive pathways, block transfer and flexible program transfer. Both receiving and sending institutions are represented on the committees undertaking these projects. No project is complete at the time of this report. A Special Report will be going out to the system shortly and will provide general information on the Transfer Innovations Initiative.

Principles & Guidelines for Flexible or Innovative Transfer

To assist articulation committees in their work, and to generate discussion about new ways of looking at articulation and transfer, a set of "Principles and Guidelines for Flexible or Innovative Transfer" was produced. This document is intended as a supplement to the general Principles and Guidelines for Transfer (the "official" transfer policy document adopted by all institutions in B.C. in the 70s). In this spirit, it has been endorsed by Council and a copy forwarded to all institutions with

a cover letter explaining the difference between the general Principles and Guidelines and the supplemental ones (endorsed only by Council) (12).

Transfer & Articulation Projects (TAP) Fund

This year a new TAP Fund (13) was established, under the auspices of the Transfer and Articulation Committee. The purpose of this fund is to provide small grants to articulation committees to fund specific projects related to transfer and articulation or designed to facilitate the work of articulation committees or other related groups. The fund was capitalized with an initial sum of $20,000.00. The first award under this program was to the Engineering Articulation Committee and the Association of Professional Engineers & Geoscientists of B.C. (APEGBC) for the production of a brochure outlining study and career paths for engineering students (14).

Articulation Committees

A new articulation committee – Adventure Tourism – was approved by the Program and Articulation Committee at its last meeting, thus bringing the total number of articulation committees to 69. It is a major responsibility of BCCAT to assist all of these committees, maintaining files of their minutes and related materials.

During the spring of 1999 Council staff attended seventeen articulation committee meetings, often for the purpose of promoting the Transfer Innovations initiative, but also for the purpose of improving general communication between the Council and articulation committees. A major emphasis of that communication was to relay the message to articulation committees that articulation meetings cost the post-secondary system a significant amount of money each year, and it is important that the committees be accountable for that expenditure. We are delighted to report, therefore, that we have received almost all of the minutes from the 1999 meetings and therefore can record the date and location of the meetings in 2000 (15). This is a significant advance over previous years, and represents the more serious view that articulation committees now take of their duty to be accountable to the institutions that fund their activity. These minutes function to alert institutions to significant discussion items at the meetings, and BCCAT to any contentious items requiring intervention, assistance or mediation.

Secondary School Representatives

The addition of representatives from secondary schools to provincial post-secondary articulation committees has been a collaborative endeavour between BCCAT and C2T2. For the past three years John FitzGibbon of C2T2 has been the liaison person with the B.C. Teachers Federation and the Career Education Society to identify and designate secondary school teachers to sit on the committees. There are 56 such representatives with another eight still being sought. Five committees do not have related secondary school curricula (16).

Vocational Articulation Committees

Several articulation committees exist for programs related to trades and apprenticeship training. While these committees are not normally concerned with transfer, they are concerned with the alignment of curriculum in their discipline so that students can move between programs. At the meetings of these committees members compare notes on adequate and timely coverage of all curricular areas required for the trades qualification. These committees are also of interest to the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission (ITAC), and to the B.C. Association of Vocational Administrators (BCAVA). BCCAT staff met with representatives of both these bodies to discuss how we can best co-operate to support the work of these committees.

Regular Meeting of Chairs and Liaison Administrators

In February 2000 a forum was held to which all articulation committee chairpersons and liaison administrators were invited. Part of the day was devoted to a discussion of the role of the Liaison Administrator. Recommendations arising from that session will be considered in detail by the Transfer and Articulation Committee. The report of that meeting is posted on the Council Web site (17)

Nursing Articulation Committee Report

The Final Report of the Nursing Articulation Project was presented to Council at its March meeting. The Nursing Articulation Committee has worked for two years to produce this report, which sets out a framework whereby institutions can make assessments of course equivalencies, thereby facilitating credit transfer for students between nursing programs at the first and second year level (18).

Telecommunications Report

A joint undertaking of BCCAT and the Centre for Curriculum, Transfer and Technology, this project assessed how communications technologies are currently being used to facilitate articulation committee business. (An Executive Summary of the report was distributed to the chairs and liaison administrators of the articulation committees (19). It recorded the level of use of technologies such as e-mail, list serves, Web sites, audio conferencing, and videoconferencing among typical instructors within the B.C. post-secondary system, and noted the perceived benefits of, and barriers to, increasing their use in order to reduce travel time and improve communications in articulation-related activities. This report formed the basis of an interactive workshop at the February meeting. Since that time, eight articulation committees have arranged to have list serves established for them on the C2T2 server.

Research Committee

As part of its role in guiding policy in higher education, the Council's research and public policy objective may be expressed as follows:

> *If it can be shown that students who first attend a college are able to transfer without difficulty, and subsequently perform well in their studies, then the public will retain confidence in the community college system, degree-granting institutions will readily accept community college students, and the entire system of post-secondary education can work in a more coordinated fashion to improve access for students in a cost-effective manner.*

In keeping with this policy objective, the Council's Research Committee, previously chaired by Dr. John Dennison and currently chaired by Dr. Roger Blackman, was very active in reviewing and recommending revisions to draft research reports prepared by various contractors prior to their recommending formal acceptance of reports by the Council. All of the Council's research reports can be found on the BCCAT Web site where they have been organized by category (20).

Council research reports are routinely sent to all institutions, with covering letters providing the context for the research and with recommendations for follow-up as appropriate.

The Council also undertook a detailed discussion of the overall direction and plan for future research and reflected upon how the Council's research is used by various post-secondary institutions (21). The results of these discussions will be considered in the Council's research plan for 2000-01.

Transcript Assessment Studies at Provincial Universities

In order to better determine the extent and kinds of courses that were denied transfer credit at our largest universities, the Council first commissioned a report by the Admissions Office at UBC. Because of the useful information provided by this study, similar reports were commissioned this year at SFU and UVic. These studies examined in detail a random sample of transcripts of college transfer students who had been admitted into various faculties. Transcripts were examined to determine how many credits had been earned by students prior to transfer, and of these, how many had been granted credit upon transfer. All courses that were denied credit were checked against a list of possible reasons. The findings indicate that the vast majority (85-90%) of course credits completed elsewhere were accepted by the universities. Reasons for non-transfer of credit included: courses not having been articulated between institutions; courses (mostly in Science) having a lesser credit value at the university; and type of courses (e.g., pre-college, ABE, vocational) not being intended for transfer. In addition, some students were denied credits because they completed more credits than are permitted. These studies provided much detail, not available through other means, on the articulation and transfer of courses to these institutions.

Overall, these studies confirm that students who complete courses articulated for transfer credit do in fact receive such credit. However, there appear to be some courses that are not receiving transfer credit that should be transferable. Institutions have been encouraged to follow-up and seek transfer credit for such courses where applicable. As quoted in the SFU report, "the results appeared to show that, for those students who took care in planning their programs and courses, the college transfer route to the university was effective and efficient."

The full reports entitled *B.C. College Transfer Credit Evaluation; An Analysis of Students Entering the University of Victoria, Winter 1998-99 Session* (22) and *Transfer Credit Evaluation of Students Entering Simon Fraser University from B.C. Colleges during the Calendar Year 1998* (23) are available on the BCCAT Web site.

Profiles of B.C. Transfer Students in B.C. Universities

For the past few years, the Council has published profiles of transfer students attending the province's three largest universities. An updated report was received this year from SFU, and reports from UBC and UVic are expected later this spring.

Such reports are highly valued by the post-secondary system because they provide useful measures of the effectiveness of current policies and procedures to facilitate student transfer and mobility. The reports provide extensive demographic information about the number of transfer students admitted to each university and the institutions from which they transferred. In addition, the data also reveal the number of credits that students transferred, which programs of study they transferred into, the numbers of students completing degrees, and how long they took to do so. The studies also analyze the academic performance of transfer students compared to direct entry students as they progressed through to graduation. Comparisons of grade point average performance on a specific number of key courses are also included. Overall, these studies continue to confirm that large numbers of students are transferring to these three universities where they are successfully completing their academic studies.

The full report entitled *Profile of B.C. College Transfer Students Admitted to Simon Fraser University 1994-95 to 1998-99* (24) is now available on the Web site.

Research Reports Underway

During the past year, the Council commissioned a series of transfer student profile reports to be prepared by UNBC to complement those produced by UBC, SFU, and UVic. Their first report is expected to be completed during fiscal year 2000-01. Likewise, the Council is currently working with the B.C. Open University to design a research study that will accurately describe its unique role in student transfer.

In order to provide an overview of the Council's research, two other reports are currently in preparation. The first will integrate the findings and results from the student profile reports at UBC, SFU, and UVic, and will summarize what has been learned from these. The second will summarize and integrate the findings from Council's research in general and will provide a critical analysis of the

implications of these findings for the development of public policy with respect to admissions and transfer in our province.

Another related study currently in progress attempts to determine to what degree any observed differences in academic performance at university between transfer students and direct entry students can be attributed to differences in high school grades obtained by these two groups.

During the past year, the Council has determined that it would like to put greater emphasis on dealing with the "admissions" side of its mandate. A preliminary investigation was started this year to identify appropriate public policy issues and to identify the kinds of research that could be undertaken to pursue this avenue of work. Consideration of a plan of activities pertaining to admissions issues will be considered by Council in the near future.

Student Transfer Handbook (*Transfer TIPS*)

A handbook entitled *B.C. Transfer TIPS* (Transfer Information for Post-secondary Success (25) has been produced, with 30,000 copies distributed to post-secondary institutions last summer. Re-printing of the first edition, revised in the light of some feedback received from institutions, is currently underway through the support of a designated grant from the Ministry. As with the first iteration, BCCAT Online will continue to feature an interactive html version, a portable document format version, and a plain text version for the visually impaired.

The *TIPS* project grew out of extensive consultation with the post-secondary system, and from the recommendations contained in several research reports, all of which pointed to the need for a user-friendly, student-oriented planning guide. It benefited greatly from a dedicated editorial/advisory committee, composed of advisors/recruiters, a student, a researcher, and representatives from CEISS and C2T2.

A preliminary survey of institutions found that *TIPS* has been made widely available to students through advising and counselling offices, career resource centres, the library and cafeteria. Some institutions included the handbook in orientation packages for all new students, while others used *TIPS* as a recruitment tool. Preliminary feedback indicates that *TIPS* is being very well received by both students and advising personnel, and in some cases has made the *B.C. Transfer Guide* a more sought-after resource.

Task Force on Standards and Processes

The Task Force on Standards and Processes was established to investigate and recommend solutions to problems caused by those institutional administrative processes that constitute barriers to smooth and efficient transfer. Chaired by Council member Maureen Shaw at the beginning of this year, since last fall it has been chaired by Council member Greg Link. Members are drawn mainly from the student services areas of post-secondary institutions.

The Task Force produced its final report in 1998-99, and approved an implementation plan for forwarding the recommendations to institutions and other appropriate agencies over a three year period. Year 1 Recommendations were forwarded in the summer of 1998 to all institutions and they have responded directly to BCCAT, indicating their level of compliance with these recommendations (26). Year 2 Recommendations went out in late fall 1999, and institutions are currently considering their responses to these recommendations.

Transfer Liaison Network

The Council has endorsed a recommendation from its Task Force on Standards and Processes to create a Transfer Liaison Network and has taken steps to initiate this network (27). The rationale behind this recommendation is that student transfer-related issues and problems can be better addressed if every post-secondary institution designates one individual from its *existing* student advising/counseling staff to be an expert in student transfer and admissions issues. The representatives will be primary contact persons within their organization for queries, problems or process issues regarding transfer. It will be the responsibility of the Council to assist in keeping these individuals up to date with respect to new transfer initiatives and to be aware of changes in the system that impact significantly on student admissions and transfer.

The Network will conduct its communications primarily through an electronic listserve. The purpose of the Network is to encourage the development of collegial working relationships among Transfer Liaison Persons (TLPs) and to facilitate inter-institutional communication and the sharing of information which can be used to analyze, refine or improve the transfer system *from the advising or the student's point of view*.

Support to BCRA Semester Dates Subcommittee

A specific recommendation of the Task Force was to request that the B.C. Registrars' Association (BCRA) develop a sub-committee to establish suggested sessional dates for the public post-secondary system in order to make transfer between institutions more efficient for students. BCCAT staff prepared a chart listing relevant institutional semester start and end dates for consideration by the BCRA committee. At a September meeting, this committee passed a motion recommending to institutions a set of guidelines that would allow students to receive final official transcripts in time for submission to the institution to which they intend to transfer. This recommendation was accepted by the BCRA.

Institutional Contact Persons Committee

This Committee is composed of two representatives (primary and secondary) from each post-secondary institution listed as a "sending" or "receiving" institution in the *B.C. Transfer Guide*. Each committee member is responsible for:

a) retaining, and distributing as required, information concerning transfer agreements in place between his/her institution and other post-secondary institutions;

b) providing a "lead contact" role for BCCAT in transmitting information to the post-secondary system, including the circulation of newsletters, special reports, bulletins, research findings, etc.;

c) organizing the proofing of the draft *B.C. Transfer Guide* to ensure the accuracy of its content for his/her own institution; and

d) proposing for discussion or examination, administrative systems that could strengthen transfer effectiveness between institutions.

The annual meeting of Institutional Contact Persons in May 1999 reviewed the process of Council's overall co-ordination and recording of *Transfer Guide* agreements and the production of the *Transfer Guide* as well as numerous other related transfer policy and procedural issues.

Support to the System

Communication with the System

This year BCCAT produced three newsletters. The April newsletter, entitled *Transfer: What's the Problem? A Special Report of the Transfer Innovations Committee* (28), was designed to raise awareness of some of the transfer difficulties faced by students and institutions. The July Research Report (29) highlighted research reports, specifically those of Lesley Andres on the students' perspective of transfer. The November newsletter (30) included notes from some 1999 articulation committee meetings, and listings of outgoing and incoming Council members. This issue initiated a new, briefer and more colourful format.

All BCCAT information and reports, as well as other reports and articles of interest to the system, are posted on the Council's Web site: www.bccat.bc.ca. In this way the Web site has become a significant resource of information related to post-secondary education and to admissions, transfer and articulation issues.

Mediating Admissions and Transfer Disputes

The Council had one major involvement in mediating a dispute during the past year. This pertained to how Simon Fraser University calculates the overall grade point average of courses completed by those students who have already completed courses at SFU, but who also have transferred in some courses from other institutions, and who wish to be accepted into the Business Administration program. The issues were very complex and related to balancing the interests of direct entry students, transfer students, and students already enrolled at SFU, all of whom were competing for a limited number of available spaces. While it was acknowledged that SFU's motivation was to be fair to all applicants, there was considerable discussion of the perception by some that the policy unfairly discriminated against transfer students in this particular admissions category. The Executive Director pursued the matter informally with the Dean of Business Administration and the issue appears to have been dealt with satisfactorily from Council's perspective.

As in past years, the Council also responded to several inquiries with respect to potential transfer difficulties. Advice and direction were provided to facilitate the resolution of such problems between respective institutions, without significant involvement from the Council.

Support To Individual Institutions

Each year Council staff responds to many requests for assistance and support from individual institutions. This year these included:

- BCIT: Staff has assisted BCIT with several requests for assistance regarding transfer policy.
- Capilano: Staff responded to a request to clarify the nature of articulation relationships in a complex and collaborative degree program, when one of the prospective sending institutions is a private post-secondary institution.
- IIG: The Executive Director met with Georges Sioui, President, and Rahel Jalan, Dean of Academic Affairs, at the Institute of Indigenous Government (IIG) to review with them the previous work of the Council in facilitating credit transfer arrangements for their unique programs and to recommend follow-up actions.
- Kwantlen: The Associate Director and the Transfer Guide Coordinator have been assisting Kwantlen to refine their approach to the administrative aspects of becoming a receiving institution.
- NLC: Staff has responded to several requests for information regarding matters of transfer policy, and regarding the interpretation of associate degree regulations.
- SFU contacted the Council requesting that assistance be provided to improve the opportunities for transfer for students wishing to transfer from BCIT to SFU. This is a somewhat unique and welcome request whereby a receiving institution has initiated the improvement of credit transfer arrangements for students who may apply to their institution. The Executive Director chaired a meeting of representatives of BCIT and SFU with the conclusion being an agreement whereby both institutions committed to work on a plan to improve credit transfer arrangements.
- SFU: Staff provided feedback to the SFU Computer Science Department in regard to their proposed new admission policy. Some changes were made to the policy as a result of our suggestions.
- TechBC: Staff continue to provide resources or respond to inquiries, as requested.
- UCFV: The Executive Director met with the President and other administrators at the University College of the Fraser Valley to discuss the role of the Council and our future plans with respect to transfer innovations and their relevance to the university colleges.
- UVic: Staff provided feedback to the Commerce department on their proposed restructuring of the Commerce degree program, and assisted the Undergraduate Chair with dissemination of relevant material, to ensure all receiving institutions were alerted to the implications of the proposed changes.

Private Post-Secondary Institutions

BCCAT was approached on several occasions this year to provide advice to private post-secondary institutions or agencies regarding transfer and articulation issues.

- City University: requested advice on transferability of their courses with provincial universities.
- Counsellor Training Institute: requested advice on degree completion and articulation for CTI students.
- Infocast Digital Arts: requested advice on articulating with the public system.
- Pacific Rim Institute of Tourism: The Associate Director has participated on two advisory committees related to public/private articulation for tourism programs.
- Richmond International College: The Associate Director provided advice regarding articulation with the public sector.

There is a growing recognition of the role of private post-secondary institutions in British Columbia. At its December 1999 meeting, the Council held a discussion of key issues about what the relationship could or ought to be between the public and private post-secondary sectors in our province. The meeting was attended by Ministry representatives and the Executive Director of the Private Post-Secondary Education Commission of British Columbia and was facilitated by Paul Gallagher, a consultant knowledgeable of both sectors. The questions that were addressed included:

- Should there be a formal policy developed under which articulation and transfer between public and private post-secondary institutions would be governed?
- Should there be articulation and/or transfer agreements between public and private post-secondary institutions, and between private post-secondary institutions?
- What restrictions, if any, should be placed on the eligibility of private institutions for articulation and transfer agreements with public institutions?
- By whom should public/private articulation and transfer arrangements be managed?
- Who should pay for the management of articulation and transfer agreements between public and private institutions?
- Who should take the lead in enabling, encouraging, or facilitating articulation and transfer agreements between public and private institutions?

The Council will continue to liaise with the Ministry and the post-secondary system to determine policy direction with respect to these issues.

Adult Graduation Credential/University Admissions

The Common Adult Graduation Credential, known officially as the B.C. Adult Graduation Diploma (BCAGD) and unofficially as the "Adult Dogwood," has now been implemented by both Ministries. This diploma replaces both the College ABE Provincial Diploma and the Ministry of Education's Adult Dogwood, and allows students to mix and match courses from the two systems and have them apply towards the credential.

BCCAT convened a meeting of the University Admissions Directors with representatives of the ABE community and both Ministries (31). The purpose of the meeting was to establish a set of common understandings about the new B.C. Adult Graduation Diploma, in order to ensure that universities have all the information they need to formulate an appropriate response to the BCAGD in regards to its use as a basis for admission. Additionally, it was perceived by participants that having representatives meet together and undertake an open discussion promoted understanding between the sectors.

Guiding Principles for Business and Commerce Transfer

Based on some concerns about whether the "Guiding Principles for Business and Commerce Transfer" were still current, and whether all institutions were aware of the terms of the protocol, a meeting was arranged to revisit the Principles, and update them if required. The Directors of the Undergraduate Programs of the Business/Commerce Faculties of SFU, UBC and UVic attended, as these institutions are the signatories to the protocol. Additionally, the chair of the Commerce Articulation Committee attended (32).

The meeting was positive and cordial, and it was recognized that some aspects of the agreement have become impossible to implement. Although no wholesale changes are required to the agreement, it was decided to monitor it, and to try some new ways of implementing the terms of course-to-course articulations between sending institutions and the three universities.

Meeting Room Availability

The Council offered rent-free use of its 16-seat meeting room adjacent to the Council's offices. It was accessed on 72 occasions in 1999-2000 by a wide variety of groups and organizations connected with the post-secondary and K-12 sectors of the public education system. This represents a considerable convenience to our colleagues in education as well as providing system wide cost savings.

Collaboration with Ministry, Agencies & Organizations

Ministry of Advanced Education, Training & Technology

The Executive Director was involved in numerous consultations with several senior Ministry staff, keeping them informed of the work of the Council as well as becoming informed of related projects being undertaken by various facets of the Ministry. He met with Ministry staff to review the Council's 1998-99 annual report, to discuss the Ministry's 1999-2000 Management Letter, and to provide information regarding the Council's anticipated budgetary requirements for 2000-01. He is currently a member of the Ministry's re-constituted Program Directors Committee, an advisory committee designed to assist with overall planning and co-ordination between the two Ministries and its agencies to facilitate better integration of the secondary and post-secondary systems.

He also participated in preliminary discussions with representatives of both Ministries to explore the feasibility and desirability of conducting a comprehensive research study to identify patterns of student mobility for students entering and moving within the post-secondary system. This is now becoming possible because all students in secondary school are required to have a Personal Education Number (PEN) which will make the task of student tracking much easier. The Council has been a strong advocate for several years in support of developing the capacity to track students within our education system.

On a number of occasions BCCAT staff provided assistance to the Ministry regarding replies to relevant letters, wording in related documents and publications (33).

Ministry of Education

The Executive Director met with several officials of the Ministry of Education to discuss their plans for the creation of several new Career Technical Centres in British Columbia. The Ministry plans include expanding the number of courses for which dual credit will be granted by both the high schools and the colleges. Policies related to the issue of dual credit were discussed.

Post-Secondary Response Forum on Secondary Career Programs

The Associate Director and the Executive Secretary assisted in the organizing of a Forum in September to provide feedback from the post-secondary system to the Ministry of Education on their proposed restructuring of Secondary Career Programs. This Forum was organized by John FitzGibbon of C2T2, with BCCAT support. The Forum was attended by approximately 30 people (34).

Centre For Curriculum, Transfer And Technology (C2T2)

The protocol agreement between the Council and the Centre clarifies the respective roles of the two agencies and identifies the kinds of projects for which there would be a commitment for collaboration. The protocol was reviewed by BCCAT and C2T2 and revised in 1999 (35). Cooperation on a variety of activities has continued to be very successful.

Prior Learning Assessment Steering Committee

The Council has maintained active participation in C2T2's Provincial Steering Committee on Prior Learning Assessment. During a portion of last year, Rachael Donovan, a member of BCCAT, chaired this Committee. Ken Harvey from School District 39 and later Dileep Athaide from Capilano College, formally represented the Council on this Committee. The Executive Director also attended some of their meetings and participates in particular on issues pertaining to the granting of transfer credit for courses awarded credit by means of a prior learning assessment.

The C2T2 was represented on BCCAT's Transfer & Articulation Committee and Associate Degree Review Task Force by Mark Battersby and Gillies Malnarich. The Executive Director presented to a C2T2 sponsored conference (The IDEA Project: Identifying & Developing Essential Abilities) which focused on the draft proposed curricular changes to the associate degrees and their relationship to essential abilities.

Secondary School Representatives on Articulation Committees

Reference has been made earlier in this report to the collaboration between BCCAT and C2T2 to designate representatives from the secondary school system to the articulation committees.

Centre For Education Information Standards And Services (CEISS)

The Council maintains regular contact with CEISS to discuss issues of mutual interest and to identify potential areas of possible collaboration. Council staff engaged in discussions with CEISS to explore their interest in conducting an analysis next year of the results obtained from the spring 2000 student outcomes survey pertaining to admissions and transfer issues.

Jean Karlinski, BCCAT Administrative Assistant, represented the Council on the steering committee of the "Opening Doors" Project. A searchable database of B.C. post-secondary education programs, the 1999-2000 "Opening Doors" CD was released in January 2000. During the past year a Web-based version of this interactive database was developed and launched on March 31, 2000.

Ken Faris, Manager, Web Services for CEISS, spent a day with the BCCAT staff reviewing and providing advice on BCCAT communications objectives and strategies. Ken provided constructive suggestions for improving both what we distribute and how we measure its effectiveness.

The Student Transfer Handbook Committee advising the development of *B.C. Transfer TIPS* benefited from the expertise of Jerry Der, a Project Manager with CEISS.

The Associate Director has agreed to serve as a member of an advisory committee working on the CEISS/PASBC Electronic Data Interchange project. However, this committee has not met in some time.

Centre for the Study of Higher Education and Training (CHET)

The Executive Director has participated along with approximately 40 others from the post-secondary system in a series of workshops sponsored by UBC's Centre for Policy Studies in Higher Education & Training. The intent of the workshops is to prepare a position paper on the "Prospects for an Integrated System of Post-Secondary Education in B.C." It should be noted that the meetings benefited from the participation of current Council member Roger Barnsley and former members John Dennison and Susan Witter. The successful role of the Council as a system-wide agency bridging the interests of the entire post-secondary system was frequently mentioned.

Outcomes Working Group (OWG)

The Executive Director is an active member of OWG and assists this committee on many aspects of its annual survey of students who exit from the college and institute sector. During the past year, BCCAT recommended revisions to the questions asked of students pertaining to transfer and proposed a new series of questions pertaining to admissions. These changes have been approved by OWG and will be included in the spring, 2000 survey (36).

Industry Training & Apprenticeship Commission (ITAC)

In addition to the meeting noted under the section on Articulation Committees above, ITAC representatives were invited to attend and make a presentation at the annual meeting of articulation chairs. Subsequent meetings have taken place with the Executive Director of Operations at ITAC to discuss follow-up from that meeting.

Other Provincial Level Committees & Organizations

Council staff is actively involved with numerous organizations and province-wide committees. The Executive Director or Associate Director regularly attend the meetings of the following organizations: the Senior Instructional Officers Committee; Deans and Directors of Academic and Career/Technical Programs; B.C. Registrars Association; and B.C. Institutional Researchers and Planners. In addition, the office maintains a relationship with several other groups such as the Senior Educational Services Officers Committee (SESOC), the B.C. Advisors Association (BCADA), Council of Chairs of Educational Councils (CoEdCo), University Vice Presidents (Academic) Committee (VPAC), the University Presidents' Council (TUPC) and the Advanced Education Council of British Columbia (AECBC) and attends meetings of these and other related organizations or committees occasionally or upon request.

The Executive Director met with the Council of Chief Executive Officers of AECBC to update them on the recent work of the Council and to discuss key policy issues and practices, which the Council recommends be implemented in all institutions. A set of twelve recommended actions pertaining to articulation and transfer policies and practices was distributed with the request that specific follow-up actions be implemented as appropriate in each institution (37).

The Executive Director attended an all-day workshop sponsored by the Standing Committee on Evaluation and Accountability (SCOEA). The workshop focused on the experience in the United States in the use of various key performance indicators to determine government funding to public post-secondary institutions and the strengths and weaknesses of this approach. He also participated in several meetings of the Key Performance Indicators Working Group, and at their request, wrote a discussion paper titled *Transfer Rates: How to measure and for what purpose?* (38). The paper presented a brief overview of the most common approaches to the calculation of transfer rates and discussed the potential use of transfer rates as a measure of institutional effectiveness. The final paper was also presented for discussion at a meeting of SCOEA.

Council staff supported the development of, and suggested revisions to, the report entitled *Learner Support and Success: Determining the Educational Support Needs for Learners into the 21st Century*. This document has been posted on the BCCAT Web site.

Out-of-Province & National Organizations

The Council continues to promote its mandate not only to improve student mobility and transfer within British Columbia but also to extend its influence across Canada. It is important to facilitate the improvement of student-friendly policies and practices that will enhance student mobility and transfer between institutions across Canada.

The Council maintains contact with related agencies in other jurisdictions and in particular with the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT). Links to these organizations are maintained on the Web site, and documents exchanged regularly. This year, the Executive Director met with Terry Moore, the Chair of ACAT. They shared information regarding current projects and activities and discussed major issues facing their respective Councils.

The Executive Director also met with officers of the College-University Consortium Council of Ontario, a newly created body with a mandate somewhat similar to that of BCCAT. He discussed and provided assistance to them with respect to their plans to improve transfer credit arrangements between universities and colleges in Ontario. Likewise, the Executive Director gave advice to the Regional Coordinator of Community Colleges in Prince Edward Island who is a member of a consortium that has been organized to facilitate transfer in the four Atlantic provinces.

The Executive Director made a presentation at the Third National Forum on Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition. He participated in a panel discussion of the implications of the Pan Canadian Protocol on the Transferability of Learning and its significance for prior learning assessment policies and practices across Canada.

The Executive Director and former Co-Chair John Dennison made a joint presentation at the Annual Conference of the Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education entitled *The British Columbia Council on Admissions & Transfer and its Influence upon Public Policy towards Higher Education*.

The Executive Director has been an active member of a Task Force on Transsfer and Mobility under the auspices of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges. Institutional signatures to the Pan Canadian Protocol on the Transferability of Learning have been solicited during the past year and by mid March, 2000 close to 80 institutions (including nine from B.C.) have signed the protocol (39). He is working with B.C. colleges and institutes to facilitate and encourage their formal endorsement of the protocol.

The Executive Director attended the First World Congress of Colleges and Polytechnics in Quebec City where he participated in a presentation on the development of the Pan-Canadian Protocol referred to above.

The Executive Director has been corresponding with the Executive of the Association of Registrars of the Universities and Colleges of Canada (ARUCC) to discuss their interest in and support for developing voluntary national transcript and record standards. The involvement with ARUCC is a natural extension of the Council's previous success in working with the B.C. Registrar's Association to

develop the B.C. Record and Transcript Guide. The ARUCC Executive has indicated its support to develop such guidelines subject to the availability of funding to do so. At the same time, the Executive Director has been in contact with Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) to solicit funding for such a proposal and they too have indicated support in principle for this. Further steps will be taken during next year to make a formal proposal to HRDC for funding and to receive endorsement from ARUCC for this initiative.

The Executive Director met at the request of Michael Bloom, Senior Research Associate & Project Manager with the Conference Board of Canada, to provide advice on their proposed research study entitled *Recognizing Learning: the Economic Costs of Not Recognizing Learning and Learning Credentials in Canada*.

The Executive Director and Associate Director met with Alan Davis, VP Academic of Athabasca University, to discuss various items of cross-border interest, including the number of B.C. students currently taking courses at Athabasca, and articulation agreements between Athabasca and B.C. institutions.

The Associate Director presented a paper titled *The Role of the Council into the Next Millennium* at the meeting of the Western Association of Registrars of the Universities & Colleges of Canada, which took place at UNBC in June 1999.

International Contacts

The Executive Director met with the College Director, Nirimba College of Technical and Further Education in Quakers Hill, Australia in support of her study tour of Canadian colleges and universities.

The Associate Director met with the Academic Manager of the Waikato Polytechnic of New Zealand to discuss the development of a credit transfer policy for the Polytechnic. She subsequently critiqued and offered advice on succeeding versions of the policy. The policy has now been successfully passed, and is in the process of being implemented. Our understanding is that this is a relatively pioneering effort in the context of post-secondary education in New Zealand.

The Executive Director met with a delegation of senior officials from the Vietnam Ministry of Education and Training, coordinated by the B.C. Centre for International Education. Vietnam has received a multi-million dollar grant from the World Bank to reform its post-secondary system. They are contemplating modeling their system to some degree after ours. The extensive system of transfer between colleges and universities is apparently a major factor in their decision to consider the B.C. model.

List of Documents Sent to Ministry

(Web site address provided in brackets following title)

1. Management Letter received from MAETT
2. "Sending Institutions" Courses in the Transfer Guide
3. Transfer Guide Course Changes in this year
4. "Receiving Institutions" Course Changes in this year
5. *British Columbia Transfer Guide 1999-2000* (www.bccat.bc.ca/tg/tgfs.htm)
6. BCCAT Online Visitor Statistics
7. Transfer Guide Co-ordinator Report
8. *The Associate Degree as a Transfer Credential* (www.bccat.bc.ca/pubs/pubsfs.htm)
9. Chronology of Activities re: Associate Degree
10. Recommended Curricular Revisions to the Associate Degree (same as #8)
11. Transfer Innovations Initiatives documentation (www.bccat.bc.ca/artic/articfs.htm)
12. Principles & Guidelines for Transfer in British Columbia (same as #11)
13. Transfer & Articulation Projects (TAP) Fund (same as #11)
14. APEGBC Brochure
15. Articulation Committee Minutes/Meeting Details chart
16. Secondary School Representatives on Articulation Committees
17. Report of Meeting of AC Chairs & Liaison Administrators (same as #11)
18. Report of Nursing Articulation Committee Project
19. Executive Summary of Telecommunications Project Report (same as #11)
20. Categorization of BCCAT Research Reports (same as #8)
21. BCCAT Research Agenda (same as #8)
22. UVic Transfer Credit Evaluation Report (same as #8)
23. SFU Transfer Credit Evaluation Report (same as #8)
24. SFU Student Profile Report (same as #8)
25. *Transfer TIPS* (same as #8)
26. Year One Status Report, Task Force on Standards & Processes
27. Transfer Liaison Network Draft Terms of Reference
28. April 1999 Special Report newsletter (same as #8)
29. July 1999 Research Report newsletter (same as #8)
30. November 1999 Newsletter (same as #8)
31. ABE/University Admission Meeting Highlights
32. Commerce Transfer Task Force Meeting Minutes
33. Sample MAETT letter with which BCCAT assisted
34. Notes from Forum on Proposed Secondary Career Program Restructuring
35. Protocol between BCCAT and C2T2
36. Student Outcomes Survey Questions
37. Presentation to Council of Chief Executive Officers
38. *Transfer Rates: How to Measure and for what Purpose?* (same as #11)
39. ACC Protocol for the Transferability of Learning